

WHEEL SLIP DETECTION AND TORQUE MANAGEMENT

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to traction control in motor vehicles and, more particularly, to wheel slip detection and torque management in motor vehicles.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] As a motor vehicle is being driven, it is not uncommon for one of the driven wheels to lose its grip on the road. To promote safety, traction control systems have been developed for detecting wheel spin and reducing wheel torque in response to wheel spin. In one such system, described in U.S. Patent No. 6,182,002 B1, vehicle acceleration is measured and used to detect wheel spin. In other systems, wheel speeds may be monitored to detect wheel spin. For example, in many vehicles having anti-lock brake systems (ABS), wheel speed sensors may be used to provide information to a traction control system. Each of the foregoing detection methods has its own advantages, and the types of slippage detected can differ depending on the detection method used.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention, in one embodiment, is directed to a method of controlling traction in a vehicle having at least one non-driven wheel speed sensor. The method includes detecting at least one
5 of actual vehicle acceleration and a wheel speed difference, comparing said at least one of said actual vehicle acceleration and said wheel speed difference to at least one of a predetermined vehicle acceleration and a predetermined wheel speed difference to detect vehicle wheel slip, and reducing wheel torque in response to said
10 detected wheel slip.

[0004] The present invention, in another embodiment, is directed to a vehicle having at least one non-driven wheel speed sensor and including a processor configured to control traction. The processor is configured to detect at least one of vehicle acceleration and a wheel
15 speed difference, compare at least one of said vehicle acceleration and said wheel speed difference to at least one of a predetermined vehicle acceleration and a predetermined wheel speed difference to detect vehicle wheel slip, and reduce wheel torque in response to said detected wheel slip.

[0005] Further areas of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description provided hereinafter. It should be understood that the detailed description and specific
20 examples, while indicating the preferred embodiment of the invention, are intended for purposes of illustration only and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention.
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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description and the accompanying drawings, wherein:

5 [0007] FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram of a vehicle including a traction control system according to one embodiment of the present invention;

[0008] FIG. 2A is a flow diagram illustrating steps for controlling traction in a vehicle according to one embodiment of the present
10 invention;

[0009] FIG. 2B is a flow diagram illustrating steps for controlling traction in a vehicle according to one embodiment of the present invention;

[0010] FIG. 2C is a flow diagram illustrating steps for controlling
15 traction in a vehicle according to one embodiment of the present invention; and

[0011] FIG. 2D is a flow diagram illustrating steps for controlling traction in a vehicle according to one embodiment of the present invention.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0012] The following description of the preferred embodiment(s) is merely exemplary in nature and is in no way intended to limit the invention, its application, or uses.

[0013] A vehicle having a traction control system in accordance with one embodiment is referred to generally in FIG. 1 by reference number 10. The vehicle 10 includes an engine 12 having a plurality of cylinders 14, each with one or more intake valves and/or exhaust valves (not shown). The engine 12 is configured with a fuel injection system 16 and an ignition system 18. An output of the engine 12 is coupled by a torque converter 22, a multiple-speed ratio transmission 24, a driveshaft 26 and a differential 28 to driven front wheels 30a. Rear wheels 30b are non-driven in the present embodiment. The transmission 24 is controlled by a controller 20.

[0014] One or more wheel speed sensors 32 transmit speed signal(s) to the controller 20. In the embodiment shown in FIG.1, driven wheels 30a and non-driven wheels 30b have speed sensors 32a and 32b respectively. In other embodiments, fewer than four wheel speed sensors may be provided. For example, one sensor is used on one of the non-driven wheels. Shaft speed sensors 34 transmit input signals to the controller 20.

[0015] An electronic throttle controller (ETC) 36 adjusts a throttle 38 in an intake manifold 40 based upon a position of an accelerator pedal 42 and a throttle control algorithm that is executed by the controller 20. The throttle 38 adjusts an output torque that drives the wheels 30a. One or more sensors (not shown), for example a manifold pressure sensor and a manifold air temperature sensor, may be provided in the intake manifold 40.

[0016] An accelerator pedal sensor 44 generates a pedal position signal that is output to the controller 20 based on a position of an accelerator pedal 42. A position of a brake pedal 46 is sensed by a brake pedal sensor 48, which generates a brake pedal position signal that is output to the controller 20. Other sensor inputs collectively indicated by reference number 50 are used by the controller 20 for traction control. Such inputs include a signal 52 indicating engine speed, a vehicle speed signal 54, an accelerator position signal 56 and a throttle position signal 58. One such signal to the controller 20, a trans throttle signal 60, indicates throttle pressure in the transmission 24. Signals 62 and 64 indicate transmission input and output pulley speeds.

[0017] An embodiment of a method of controlling traction in a motor vehicle is referred to generally by reference number 100 in FIGs. 2A-D. The method 100 is embodied, for example, in software executed by the controller 20. Referring now to FIG. 2A, the routine 100 is entered in step 104. In step 108, the controller 20 determines whether wheel speed-based wheel slip detection is to be performed as further described below. In step 112, the controller 20 determines whether acceleration-based wheel slip detection is to be performed, also further described below.

[0018] Specifically, in step 108 the controller 20 determines whether wheel speed difference detection is selected, whether an anti-lock brake system (ABS) is present, whether a non-driven wheel speed equals or exceeds a threshold non-driven wheel speed value, and

whether the trans throttle signal 60 equals or exceeds a threshold throttle value. If yes, the controller executes wheel speed-based wheel slip detection in step 116. If no, the controller 20 executes acceleration-based wheel slip detection in step 120.

5 **[0019]** Wheel speed difference detection is described with reference to FIGs. 1 and 2B. In the present embodiment, wheel slip occurs when two conditions are met. A first condition is present when a difference is detected between a non-driven rear wheel speed and a driven front wheel speed. A second condition is present when a front wheel speed
10 acceleration exceeds a maximum acceleration achievable by the vehicle for current conditions. Thus, the controller 20 determines whether a speed difference between a driven front wheel 30a and a non-driven rear wheel 30b equals or exceeds a calibration value WhlCalEnt. The value WhlCalEnt, and other predetermined values
15 described further below, may be stored in memory associated with the controller 20.

[0020] In the present exemplary embodiment, the controller 20 also uses wheel speed acceleration in detecting wheel slip. Accordingly, the controller 20 also determines in step 124 whether a driven wheel
20 speed acceleration equals or exceeds a predetermined value. For example, the controller determines whether a front wheel speed derivative equals or exceeds a calibration value DerivCalEnt, where DerivCalEnt is a function of axle torque and vehicle speed.

[0021] If both WhlCalEnt and DerivCalEnt are equaled and/or
25 exceeded, the controller 20 increments a wheel-speed-case entry timer

and sets a wheel-speed-case exit timer to zero in step 128. In step 132, the controller 20 determines whether the entry timer has reached a calibration value TmrCalEnt. If not, control returns to step 124.

When the entry timer has exceeded TmrCalEnt, a signal

- 5 Wheel_Is_Slipping_WSPD is set to "True" in step 136. The controller performs torque management, as will be described further below in conjunction with FIG. 2D.

- [0022] If step 124 is false, the controller 20 determines whether the wheel speed difference between the front wheel 30a and the rear
10 wheel 30b is less than or equal to a calibration value WhlCalExt in step 144. The controller 20 also determines whether the front wheel speed derivative is less than or equal to a calibration value DerivCalExt, which is a function of axle torque and vehicle speed. If false, the controller 20 returns to step 116. If true, the controller 20 decrements the entry
15 timer and increments the exit timer in step 148. If the exit timer is less than a calibration value TmrCalExt in step 152, the controller 20 returns to step 116. If the exit timer equals or exceeds TmrCalExt, the entry timer is set to zero in step 156. In step 160, a signal
Wheel_Is_Slipping_WSPD is set to "False". The controller proceeds to
20 perform torque management, as further described below in conjunction with FIG. 2D.

- [0023] Referring now to FIGs. 2A and 2C, the controller 20 executes acceleration-based wheel slip detection. Acceleration-based wheel-slip detection is described in U.S. Patent No. 6,182,002 B1, issued on
25 January 30, 2001 and assigned to the assignee hereof and

acceleration-based detection is also described in Research Disclosure Publication Number 464034, both of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

[0024] In the present embodiment, wheel slip is detected when an
5 actual vehicle acceleration exceeds a maximum acceleration
achievable by the vehicle 10 for current conditions. Referring now to
FIG. 2C, actual acceleration is determined using least-squares
approximation in step 162. In step 164, axle torque and output pulley
speed are used as independent variables to determine expected
10 acceleration from a lookup table. In step 166, expected acceleration is
subtracted from actual acceleration to determine acceleration error. If
actual acceleration equals or exceeds expected acceleration in step
168, and if wheel-slip torque management is being ramped out in step
170, a signal `Wheel_Is_Slipping_Accel` is set to "True" in step 172. In
15 step 174, an acceleration-case entry timer is incremented and an
acceleration-case exit timer is cleared.

[0025] The controller compares the acceleration-case enter timer to
a delay time based on acceleration error in step 176. If the enter timer
equals or exceeds the delay time, the signal `Wheel_Is_Slipping_Accel`
20 is set to "True" in step 178 and the controller 20 performs torque
management in FIG. 2D.

[0026] If actual acceleration does not equal or exceed expected
acceleration in step 168, the controller 20 increments the acceleration-
case exit timer and decrements the acceleration-case enter timer in
25 step 180. If the exit timer equals or exceeds a calibration value in step

182, the signal Wheel_Is_Slipping_Accel is set to “False” in step 184.

The controller performs torque management in FIG. 2D.

[0027] Referring now to FIG. 2D, the controller 20 performs torque management in a manner dependent on the type(s) of wheel slip
5 detection being used. If the signal Wheel_Is_Slipping_Accel is “True” in step 186, the controller 20 determines an applicable torque reduction based on acceleration error and input pulley speed in step 188. If the signal Wheel_Is_Slipping_Accel is “False” in step 186, the controller ramps out torque management in step 190 and proceeds to perform
10 another loop.

[0028] If the signal Wheel_Is_Slipping_WSPD is “True” in step 192, the controller determines an applicable torque reduction based on input pulley speed and speed difference between driven and non-driven wheels in step 194. If step 192 is “False”, the controller 20 ramps out
15 torque management in step 196 and performs another loop.

[0029] If only one type of wheel slip detection is being executed as determined in step 197, the controller ramps in torque management in step 198. Step 198 applies the torque reduction determined in step 188 or step 194 and control performs another loop. If both types of
20 wheel detection are being used as determined in step 197, the controller 20 ramps in torque management. Step 199 uses the smaller value of the torque reductions determined in steps 188 and 194 and control performs another loop.

[0030] While torque management is performed in the present
25 embodiment, the controller 20 specifies a transmission speed ratio that

is based on a current vehicle speed. Thus a speed ratio is increased in the event of wheel slippage. To avoid component slippage, the controller also specifies a line pressure to the transmission based on the specified speed ratio.

5 **[0031]** It should be noted that wheel slip detection methods and torque management may differ in other embodiments. For example, wheel speed acceleration is not used to detect wheel slip, for example, as shown in step 124 (shown in FIG. 2B). Accordingly, the value Deriv_Cal_Ent is set to a minimum value and Deriv_Cal_Ext is set to a
10 maximum value in such an embodiment.

[0032] In another embodiment, a vehicle does not have a driven wheel speed sensor. Output pulley speed and/or output pulley speed acceleration may be used instead of the driven wheel speed and/or the driven wheel speed acceleration. In yet another embodiment, wheel
15 slippage is controlled by controlling maximum front and rear wheel speeds. In still another embodiment, wheel slip is detected by comparing an average of driven wheel speeds to a non-driven wheel speed.

[0033] A vehicle with a multiple-speed transmission can be provided
20 with traction control by programming a controller and providing one wheel sensor. Traction control thus can be easily installed in many types of vehicles, including but not limited to vehicles without ABS. Since more than one type of slip detection can be used, various types of slippage can be detected and driving can be made safer. Because

torque reduction control is improved, vehicle driveability also is improved.

[0034] The description of the invention is merely exemplary in nature and, thus, variations that do not depart from the gist of the invention are intended to be within the scope of the invention. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention.